

# Eastern Sierra Nevada & Northern Mojave Desert

## Recreation Information Update

December 28, 2011 - January 3, 2012

### Eastern Sierra InterAgency Visitor Center

Junction of US HWY 395 & SR 136

Lone Pine, California 93545

(760) 876-6222

TDD 876-6228

**Open Daily: 8:00am to 5:00pm - Open New Year's Day**

**ROADS:** Major Eastern Sierra roads are open, including US 395. Trans Sierra roads - SR 4 (Ebbets Pass), SR 108 (Sonora Pass) and SR 120 (Tioga Pass - no overnight parking) are open. SR 89 (Monitor Pass) is open. Weather and road conditions can change rapidly this time of year; mountain passes and roads are subject to immediate controls and/or closures. Drivers headed to the mountains need to be sure their vehicles are equipped with chains, including those with snowtires. Call 1-800-427-ROAD (1-800-427-7623) or visit the website at [www.dot.ca.gov](http://www.dot.ca.gov), for California highway conditions and construction schedules. For Nevada roads, call 1-877-NVROADS (1-877-687-6237) or visit the web at [www.nevadadot.com](http://www.nevadadot.com).

**BODIE STATE HISTORIC PARK** road (SR270) is open. Mono Mills road (SR 120) and June Lake Loop (SR 158) are open. Rock Creek is open to the pack station. In Bishop Creek, SR 168 is open to Aspendell and the South Lake road is open to Bishop Creek Lodge. In the White Mountains, the paved road to the **ANCIENT BRISTLECONE PINE FOREST AND SCHULMAN GROVE** is open; the White Mountain dirt road is open with snow, 4x4 required. Big Pine Canyon is open to the trailhead.

Major highways through **DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK** are open. The Big Pine, Titus Canyon, Salt Creek, Devils Golf Course and West Side dirt roads are open. The Upper Wildrose road is icy to the Charcoal Kilns, continuing to Mahogany Flat; 4x4 high clearance recommended as there is some snow. The North Saline Valley road is open; 4x4 high clearance vehicles recommended. The South Pass into Saline Valley is posted closed by Inyo County (4x4 high clearance vehicles required). Rangers ask visitors traveling to remote locations to leave a complete itinerary at home, obtain a good backcountry road map and be prepared for the unexpected. Drivers need to be sure their vehicle is in good condition and to carry an additional spare tire, extra gas, food and water. For backcountry roads information, check the website at [www.nps.gov/deva](http://www.nps.gov/deva) ("Plan Your Visit/Things To Do/Outdoor Activities") and the Morning Report for current conditions.

**WEATHER:** High pressure, located over Southern California mid week, is producing sunny and warm days over the Eastern Sierra and Northern Mojave regions. This high is expected to weaken somewhat Thursday, resulting in some high clouds, periods of gusty winds and slightly cooler temperatures. High pressure will rebound starting Friday, clearing skies, reducing winds and warming temperatures to above normal through the New Year weekend. Highs have been in the lower 30s in the mountains, lower 60s in the Owens Valley and upper 60s in Death Valley, with the lows ranging from lower 20s in the mountains, to the upper 30s in Death Valley.

**CAMPGROUNDS:** **INYO COUNTY** campgrounds are open. The **BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT** campgrounds at Tuttle Creek (fee/no water) and the Pleasant Valley Pit (fee/no water) are open. Additional privately operated campgrounds & RV facilities are open throughout the area.

**INYO NATIONAL FOREST**, Lone Pine to Lee Vining - the following campgrounds are open: Lone Pine (no water/no fee), Bitterbrush (no water/no fee) and Holiday in Rock Creek (no water/no fee).

**YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK** - Yosemite Valley campgrounds have sites open and reservable. Reservations are accepted five months in advance on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, for a one-month block through [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov); or call 1-877-444-6777. Sites are available on a first-come, first-served basis at Wawona (SR 41 south of Yosemite Valley), Hodgdon Meadows (SR 120, near Big Oak Flat) and Camp Four walk-in campground in Yosemite Valley. For information, visit the web site at [www.nps.gov/yose](http://www.nps.gov/yose).

**DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK**, open sites include: Furnace Creek, Sunset, Texas Spring, Stovepipe Wells, Mesquite Springs, Emigrant (tent only/no fee) and Wildrose (no fee). Reservations for Furnace Creek are available six months in advance for the period of 10/15 to 1/31, or for group sites 12 months in advance through [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov). Furnace Creek campground will close 2/1/12 for sewer and water line replacement, estimated closure 2 - 3 months. RV hook-ups are available at Furnace Creek Ranch, Stovepipe Wells Village and Panamint Springs Resort. For more information, visit [www.nps.gov/deva](http://www.nps.gov/deva).

**RED ROCK CANYON STATE PARK**, on SR 14 south of Ridgecrest, offers great desert camping.

### Cooperating Agencies of the Eastern Sierra InterAgency Visitor Center

Inyo County

California - Department of Fish & Game

City of Los Angeles - Department of Water & Power

California - Department of Transportation

National Park Service

Bureau of Land Management

Mono County

USDA - Forest Service

**FISHING:** General trout season is closed in the Eastern Sierra. However, the **OWENS RIVER** south of Crowley Lake (including Pleasant Valley Reservoir and Tinnemaha Reservoir) and **DIAZ LAKE** are open to year-round fishing. California fishing regulations are available at sporting good stores selling fishing licenses, or on the web at [www.dfg.ca.gov](http://www.dfg.ca.gov).

**HUNTING:** General hunting season for quail and chukar is open. Waterfowl season for ducks (including Mergansers), common Moorhen, American Coot and geese is open.

**WINTER SPORTS:** **MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN** is open with an 18" - 24" base of machine groomed snow. Please be aware, some early season obstacles do exist, the available terrain and number of lifts is increasing as snow allows. The Canyon and Eagle lodges are open. Ski and ride with care. Visit the web site at [www.mammothmountain.com](http://www.mammothmountain.com), or call 1-888-766-9778 for daily lift operations and snow conditions.

The outdoor **MAMMOTH LAKES ICE RINK** is open and offers public skating sessions, pick-up hockey and special events. Skate rentals and snack services are available. During the holidays the rink will open daily at 11:30am and close at 9:30pm, with 3 hour skate sessions. The rink is located on Meridian Blvd. next to the Mammoth Lakes Library. Call 760-934-2505 for information.

Visit the **MAMMOTH LAKES WELCOME CENTER** (on SR 203) for more information on roads, fees/passes, permits, recreation updates, current snow conditions, trail maps and visitor guides; open daily 8:00am to 5:00pm (closed 1/1).

**BACKCOUNTRY:** Backpackers should be prepared with winter gear for snowy/icy terrain, freezing temperatures and sudden weather changes. Most roads to trailheads are closed for the winter. **WILDERNESS PERMITS** are required for overnight travel all year long. Trailhead quotas, which daily limit the number of hikers on trails, are no longer in effect for Eastern Sierra wilderness areas. Self-issue permits can be obtained in the night boxes at the following locations: InterAgency Visitor Center (Lone Pine), Bishop Ranger Station, Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center, Mono Basin Scenic Area Visitor Center (Lee Vining) and Bridgeport Ranger Station after office hours. For information on Inyo National Forest wilderness permits, please visit the web at [www.fs.usda.gov/inyo](http://www.fs.usda.gov/inyo).

**FOR THE HOLIDAYS:** Join in the 112<sup>th</sup> **Annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count**, the oldest and largest citizen science event in the world continuing through 1/5/12. For over a hundred years, people have gathered during the winter holiday season to count birds. All skill levels are encouraged to participate. Contact the following individuals for counts in the region:

**Kern County: South Fork Valley** - Saturday, 12/31 - contact Denise LaBerteau at [eremico@aol.com](mailto:eremico@aol.com)

**Kern County: Kern River Valley** - Sunday, 1/1 - contact Alison Sheehey at [krpfriends@audubon.org](mailto:krpfriends@audubon.org)

**Joshua Tree National Park** - Monday, 1/2 - contact Joe Zarki at [lutzarki@roadrunner.com](mailto:lutzarki@roadrunner.com)

**Woodfords/Alpine County** - Wednesday, 1/4 (re-scheduled from earlier date) - contact Andrea Salmi at [andisalmi@yahoo.com](mailto:andisalmi@yahoo.com)

**THIS WEEK'S EVENTS:** Mono Council for the Arts presents the **NEW YEAR ARTS FESTIVAL** through 12/31, at the Minaret Mall; 10:00am to 6:00pm. A terrific selection of arts & crafts by local and visiting artists are available to purchase.

## ONGOING ACTIVITIES:

**BODIE STATE HISTORIC PARK** is open daily 9:00am to 3:00pm (open 1/1). Visitors must use over-snow transportation to access the park. Bring drinking water, food and plenty of warm clothes for a winter visit to Bodie.

Remember the days of the "Slim Princess"! Visit **LAWS RAILROAD MUSEUM & HISTORIC SITE**, four miles north of Bishop on HWY 6, to learn of early days in the Owens Valley. Laws is open daily 10:00am to 4:00pm (closed 1/1).

**EASTERN CALIFORNIA MUSEUM** in Independence is open from 10:00am to 5:00pm daily (closed 12/31 & 1/1), with exhibits on Inyo County; including a significant collection of Native American baskets and artifacts from Manzanar NHS.

The Interpretive Center at **MANZANAR NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**, located 5 miles south of Independence, is open daily from 9:00am to 4:30pm (open 1/1). Self-guided walking and auto tours make it easy to explore the park. Check at the Interpretive Center, or the web at [www.nps.gov/manz](http://www.nps.gov/manz), for more information.

Visit the Beverly & Jim Rogers **MUSEUM OF LONE PINE FILM HISTORY**; with exhibits celebrating the heroes, the films and the locations of the many movies shot in the area. The museum opens daily at 10:00am; closing at 6:00pm Monday through Wednesday, at 7:00pm Thursday through Saturday and at 4:00pm on Sunday (closed 1/1).

**BLM JAWBONE STATION REGIONAL OHV FACILITY** is open 9:00am to 5:00pm daily for trip assistance (open 1/1). The station is located 25 miles north of Mojave on SR 14 for pre-trip information; call 1-760-373-1146.

**DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK VISITOR CENTER** (temporary) at the Furnace Creek Ranch is open daily from 8:00am to 5:00pm (open 1/1). Ranger talks and other interpretive programs are presented daily. An evening program is presented at 7:00pm in a variety of locations. Check at the Visitor Center, or [www.nps.gov/deva](http://www.nps.gov/deva) for information. **SCOTTY'S CASTLE** has "Living History" tours from 9:00am to 5:00pm (open 1/1) and "Underground Mystery Tours" daily.

Reports on current recreation conditions, schedules of planned events and detailed information on visitor destinations throughout the Eastern Sierra Nevada and Northern Mojave Desert are available daily at the Visitor Center (open 1/1). 12/28/11kcw